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ART. VI. — 1. *Reminiscences of Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Robert Southey.* By JOSEPH COTTLE. New York : Wiley & Putnam. 1847. pp. 378.

2. *Biographia Literaria, or Biographical Sketches of my Literary Life and Opinions.* By S. T. COLERIDGE. Second Edition, prepared in part by the late H. N. COLERIDGE, completed and published by his Widow. London : William Pickering. 1847. 2 vols. 12mo.

THIRTEEN years have passed since the death of Coleridge, and his biography is still unwritten. The accounts of his character and life that have appeared have been fragmentary and unsatisfactory, leaving much to conjecture, and letting the curtain fall just where the spectator had become the most deeply interested. Still, from a comparison of these many partial accounts, and from his own letters and those of his friends, particularly of Southey and Lamb, which have been published within the last few years, one may gain a somewhat connected view of the life of this remarkable man. Two important contributions to this object have appeared within a few months ; one, a *rifacimento* of a former work, coming from Coleridge's oldest surviving friend, who has gone back for fifty years, and brought together many reminiscences such as no one but himself could have supplied. The other comes from Coleridge's only daughter, connected with a new edition of his *Biographia Literaria*, in the shape of a *Biographical Supplement* to that work. It is invested with a peculiarly melancholy interest ; having been commenced by Mr. Henry Nelson Coleridge, and its completion being prevented by his death, it is now published incomplete by his widow.

But these works still leave much to be desired. A character so remarkable as that of Mr. Coleridge deserves and demands some permanent record ; a record which should at once be faithful in its delineation of those heights to which it rose almost "above a mortal pitch," and of those depths to which it sunk so low that one shudders to look down. But this would require no common hand ; and as yet none of those who have written of Coleridge have given proof that they possessed the needed power. Foster, in speaking of the life that was promised and partially executed by Gillman, says, — "How I despise biography, as it is commonly

managed!" Had he been speaking of all the notices, with but few exceptions, that have appeared concerning Coleridge, he might have made much the same remark.

The old maxim, *Nil de mortuis nisi bonum*, seems to have been so much regarded as to cause the neglect of that more generous one, *Nil de mortuis nisi verum*. If a man's biography is worth writing at all, it is worth writing honestly. Coleridge in his *Friend*, says, — "It is, no doubt, the duty of an honest biographer to portray the prominent imperfections as well as excellences of his hero." A fame founded upon false grounds is not worth having. The highest interest and the only value which biography can possess must consist in its truth. The lights and the shades should be set off one against another, the springs of action should be shown; and when the whole has been told, the judgment may well be left to others, with an assured belief that time will bring about a righteous verdict. We would not be understood here as recommending that minute scrutiny of a man's life which would bring to light those details which can only gratify a malicious spirit or a childish curiosity. We consider nothing as more undesirable than this. What we would urge is, that there should be no concealment of that which is of real importance in forming a true estimate of the character; that there should not be

"A flattering, false insculption on the tomb,"

to belie the past and to deceive the future, but that the biographer should think of the dead, who have gone where deceit is vain, as saying to him, — "Speak of me as I was."

From the causes to which we have alluded, we have found it somewhat difficult to gain a satisfactory view of Mr. Coleridge's character; and it has only been from a comparison of the different publications concerning him with each other and with his own writings that we have been enabled to arrive at any satisfactory conclusion.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born on the 21st of October, 1772, at Ottery, St. Mary, Devonshire. He was the youngest of ten children, and as his father, the vicar of the parish of Ottery and master of the grammar school, had but a small salary, the means of the family were, of course, much straitened. Of his mother but little has been handed down. We should judge that she was a devoted mother and wife; but

she apparently had little strength of mind, and was ignorant how to develop the faculties of her children in the wisest manner, and weak enough to make the youngest her favorite. There are some stories respecting the eccentricities of the vicar which are interesting only as one can trace in them the origin of some of the peculiarities of his more distinguished son. Coleridge, in a letter to his friend Poole, says of his father, — “In learning, good-heartedness, absentness of mind, and excessive ignorance of the world, he was a perfect Parson Adams.”

The early years of the future poet were passed sadly enough. Petted at home, he was tormented at school; driven from boyish plays, he read incessantly, while, “for amusement,” he tells us, he would act over in the fields by himself the stories in the *Arabian Nights* and the *Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*.

“So I became a dreamer, and acquired an indisposition to all bodily activity; I was fretful, and inordinately passionate; and as I could not play at any thing, and was slothful, I was despised and hated by the boys; and because I could read and spell, and had, I may truly say, a memory and understanding forced into almost unnatural ripeness, I was flattered and wondered at by all the old women. And so I became very vain, and despised most of the boys that were at all near my own age, and before I was eight years old I was a *character*. Sensibility, imagination, vanity, sloth, and feelings of deep and bitter contempt for almost all who traversed the orbit of my understanding, were even then prominent and manifest.” — *Biographia Literaria*, Vol. II., p. 320.

Well might he say to Mr. Poole, to whom, in 1797, he addressed a series of autobiographical letters,* from which we have made the foregoing extracts, — “To me this task will be a useful one. It will renew and deepen my reflections on the past; and it will perhaps make you behold with no unforgiving or impatient eye those weaknesses and defects in my character which so many untoward circumstances have concurred in planting there.”

In 1781, before Coleridge was nine years old, his father died. He continued to live with his mother at Ottery till the

* These letters are published, for the first time, in the *Biographical Supplement* to the new edition of the *Biographia Literaria*, and afford much fuller information of the early years of his life than we before possessed.

spring of 1782, when he was sent to London to remain with his uncle for a few weeks previous to entering Christ's Hospital.

"My uncle was very proud of me, and used to carry me from coffee-house to coffee-house, and tavern to tavern, where I drank, and talked, and disputed as if I had been a man. Nothing was more common than for a large party to exclaim in my hearing, that I was a prodigy, &c. ; so that while I remained at my uncle's, I was most completely spoilt and pampered, both mind and body." — *Biographia Literaria*, Vol. II., p. 326.

In July he was admitted to Christ's Hospital, and there underwent the trying experience in a boy's life, when, for the first time separated from home, he is thrown upon his own resources and compelled to make a place for himself. Coleridge remained at Christ's Hospital for eight years.

Here it was that that friendship with Charles Lamb, which death alone was permanently to interrupt, commenced ; and long afterward Lamb embodied his recollections of the school-boy life of his friend in that beautiful essay, "Christ's Hospital five-and-thirty Years ago." Who that has read his glowing description of Coleridge at this time, so sad from the contrast with his later life, can forget it, and who that has read it once but will be glad to read it again ?

"Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the dayspring of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee, — the dark pillar not yet turned, — Samuel Taylor Coleridge, — Logician, Metaphysician, Bard ! — How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he weighed the disproportion between the *speech* and the *garb* of the young *Mirandula*), to hear thee unfold, in thy deep and sweet intonations, the mysteries of Jamblicus, or Plotinus (for even in those years thou waxedst not pale at such philosophic draughts), or reciting Homer in his Greek, or Pindar, — while the walls of the old Grey Friars reëchoed to the accents of the *inspired charity-boy* !"

The Reverend James Bowyer was at this period head master of Christ's Hospital. He was a stern master, and in Coleridge's opinion a sensible man. Coleridge through life was accustomed to speak in warm terms of the obligations which his pupils were under to him, not merely in regard to his discipline of their intellects, but also to the cultivation of their taste. He inspired them with a cordial

admiration of the classics, taught them to analyze their different beauties, and, by the comparison of their own compositions with those of the more elegant writers, pointed out to them the defects into which they were likely to fall, and the excellences which they should endeavour to attain. Little seems to have been done for their religious or moral education ; though Coleridge long afterward admitted that he had received one just flogging at school, and that was for his taking occasion to declare himself an infidel. Coleridge stood high at school in his studies ; not so much, however, from ambition, as from his natural facility of acquisition and strength of memory. He stood so high, indeed, that in 1790 he was elected to College, and bade farewell to school in a beautiful sonnet, beginning, —

“ Farewell, parental scenes ! a sad farewell !
To you my grateful heart still fondly clings,
Though fluttering round on Fancy’s burnished wings
Her tale of future joy Hope loves to tell.”

On the 5th of February, 1791, Coleridge entered at Jesus College, Cambridge. He was not yet nineteen years old.

His natural taste had led him to devote much time to various metaphysical and theological writers, whose obscure speculations had bewildered and unsettled a mind originally not well balanced. He had neglected mathematics and the other branches of exact science, and late in life he thus mournfully expressed his sense of the great disadvantage which this had been to him : — “ In a long brief dream-life of regretted regrets, I still find a noticeable space marked out by the regret of having neglected the mathematical sciences. No weeks, few days, pass unhaunted by a fresh conviction of the truth in the Platonic superscription over the portal of Philosophy, —

Μήδεις ἀγεωμέτρητος εἰσίστω.”

The want of that strict discipline of the reasoning powers which is gained by the study of mathematics was a loss of more than usual importance to Coleridge. Highly endowed with imagination by nature, his education had tended to develop this faculty still further, until it had assumed a disproportionate influence over his life. “ History and particular facts lost all interest in my mind,” he says of himself. He did more in forming plans than in executing them. His moral

perceptions were strong and acute in regard to matters of theory, but his conscience was often silent and inoperative in the affairs of every-day occurrence. Flattered when a child, wondered at when a boy, conscious of possessing most remarkable powers, his vanity was at times excessive. He had no fixed principles and no high object to live for.

The summer after he entered college, he gained Sir William Brown's gold medal for the Greek ode. It was on the Slave-trade. Once or twice afterward he was an unsuccessful candidate for college honors, though there can be no doubt that at this time he was a very considerable proficient in classical studies.

An old college friend,* who very shortly after Coleridge's death published some reminiscences of these days, said of him, — "Coleridge was very studious, but his reading was desultory and capricious; he was ready at any time to unbend his mind in conversation, and for the sake of this, his room was a constant rendezvous of conversation-loving friends." Two years passed in this manner, the only fruits of which now remaining are a few short pieces in verse published among his "Juvenile Poems." That these were unsatisfactory years to himself we cannot doubt.

"Prodigal and reckless of his priceless wealth,
Time, talents, energies, occasion, health,"

he accomplished nothing worthy of himself. Indolence had thrown her leaden mantle over him, though now and then the thought of what he might be and do would come over him, and rouse him to temporary exertion. We do not doubt that he was always engaged in some literary pursuit, but he seems to have turned capriciously from one study to another, as his taste might dictate, and to have chosen that which most suited his inclination rather than that which might require exertion, or was fitted to discipline and cultivate his various powers. In lines written about this time, he says, —

"To me hath Heaven with bounteous hand assigned
Energetic reason and a shaping mind,
The daring ken of Truth, the Patriot's part,
And Pity's sigh, that breathes the gentle heart.
Sloth-jaundiced all!" †

* C. V. Le Grice, *College Reminiscences. Gentleman's Magazine*, December, 1834.

† *Poetical Works*, Vol. I. p. 59, Boston, 1835.

It is difficult, from the want of dates to most of his early poems, to assign them to any particular years ; but the few that we are able to attribute to the period of his residence in Cambridge are characterized rather by beauty of expression and metrical harmony than by any remarkable depth of thought.

The summer of 1793 he spent at Ottery, and returned to Cambridge in October. He had not been here a month when suddenly he left his college and went to London. The motives which led to this hasty step can only be conjectured. Mr. Henry Nelson Coleridge, who is perhaps the best authority, says that he left Cambridge in a moment of despondency and vexation of spirit, occasioned principally by some debts, not amounting to one hundred pounds. Mr. Gillman thinks that his despondency was increased by his friend Middleton's leaving the University. Mr. Cottle says that Coleridge had told him that it was produced by the rejection of his addresses by a Miss Mary Evans, to whom he had written one or two poems, and whom he a year afterward mentions in a letter to his college friend Masters as "*Mary Evans, quam afflictim et perditè amabam.*"

In a few days after reaching London "he was reduced to want, and, observing a recruiting advertisement, resolved to get bread and overcome a prejudice at the same time, by becoming a soldier." He accordingly enlisted, and, in order to keep his initials, gave his name as Silas Titus, or Silas Tompkins, Cumberbach. His adventures as a soldier, as he afterwards related them, were uncomfortable and ridiculous enough, and we should judge that the comparison between the life of a student and that of a dragoon must have proved somewhat unfavorable to the latter. His friends meanwhile were at a loss to account for his sudden disappearance, when fortunately, by a chance recognition in the street, his situation became known, and his family with some difficulty effected his discharge. This we suppose was that "just so much of folly" which, as he imagined, was to "make his early manhood more securely wise."

In April, 1794, Coleridge returned to Cambridge, where he remained till the beginning of the summer vacation. But the adventures of the preceding six months had broken the continuity of his college life, and given birth to new plans for the future. He had now no chance of obtaining a fellowship

at the University, and had moreover become a professed Unitarian, a change which, of course, would shut him out from all those advantages that might have lain open to him had he remained a member of the Established Church. His friends have tried to make it appear that Coleridge was never at heart a Unitarian. Mr. H. N. Coleridge says, — “His Unitarianism, such as it was, was not of the ordinary quality.” But as Mr. Talfourd, in his life of Lamb, has well remarked, — “There can be no doubt that Coleridge’s Unitarianism was the result of strong conviction, so strong that with all the ardor of a convert he sought to win proselytes to his chosen creed, and proposed to spend his days in preaching it.”

If Coleridge did all this under the name of Unitarianism, believing at the same time, as he afterward said he did, that the Unitarian interpretations of the Scripture were intolerable upon any principles of sound criticism, we confess that it shows a state of mind such as we cannot readily understand. But we do not believe that this was the case ; we think that we meet here with a peculiarity of Coleridge’s mind which was afterward shown in numerous instances. It seems to us that Coleridge was accustomed to adopt opinions of the highest importance, rather from their coincidence with certain temporary theories of his own, than from such a thorough analysis and examination of their foundations, as every reflecting man is called upon to make for himself. Of course, nothing was more likely than that, with advance in life, his theories should undergo a change, and consequently the opinions founded upon them, until by degrees, by a further process of self-deception, he persuaded himself that he never actually had held such opinions, but that there had always been in his mind some reserved clause, as it were, which had given a different character to the whole. This view will, we think, explain numerous inconsistencies in his character and writings, otherwise unintelligible ; and afford some excuse for the manner in which he was accustomed to speak of Unitarianism in his later life. For instance, he says in a letter to Cottle, dated in 1807, — “Socinianism, misnamed Unitarianism, is not only not Christianity, it is not even religion ; it does not *relegate* ; does not bind anew.”* And again, in his

* Cottle’s *Reminiscences*, p. 233.

Table Talk, he is represented as saying, — “Unitarianism is, in effect, the worst of one kind of Atheism joined to one of the worst kinds of Calvinism.”*

We are tempted here to make another remark, suggested by our first quotation; that not unfrequently Coleridge’s reasoning was founded on a verbal quibble, made to take the place of a logical argument, when no argument was to be found. To illustrate this still further, we quote again from the Table Talk: — “By the by, what do you [Unitarians] mean by exclusively assuming the title of Unitarians? As if Trio-Unitarians were not necessarily Unitarians, as much (pardon the illustration) as an apple-pie must of course be a pie!”†

But to return once more to our narrative. In June, 1794, leaving Cambridge, he went to Oxford to visit an old school-fellow, and here for the first time met Southey, who was then an undergraduate at Baliol College. They appear to have been mutually interested in each other at once; and this chance visit laid the foundation of a friendship more valuable to Coleridge in after life than any other which he ever made. He did not long remain at Oxford, but soon, in company with two or three friends, set off on a pedestrian tour through a portion of Wales. On his return from this journey, Coleridge went by appointment to meet Southey at Bristol. Here they were to make arrangements for putting into execution a plan, which was formed probably at Oxford, for emigrating to America, accompanied by a few college friends, visionary like themselves, and, settling

“Where Susquehanna pours his untamed stream,”

“form a social colony, in which there was to be a community of property, and all that was selfish was to be proscribed.” This scheme, under the title of Pantisocracy, had filled the minds of the young men with the most brilliant anticipations, and they determined to set earnestly to work to accomplish them. After a short stay at Bristol, where he was introduced to his future wife, and to Mr. Joseph Cottle, then a publisher in that city, and a writer of verse himself, Coleridge returned for the last time to Cambridge. Here he published *The Fall of Robespierre*, a drama writ-

* Vol. II., p. 20.

† Vol. II., p. 20.

ten jointly by himself and Southey, and showing but little talent. He then went to London, and renewed his friendship with Lamb. They used to meet in the evenings at the Salutation and Cat Inn, and here, drinking egg-hot and smoking Orinooko ("associated circumstances," as Lamb said, "which ever forcibly recall to my mind our evenings and nights at the Salutation"), they sat together through the winter nights, beguiling the cares of life with poetry.

Early in 1795, still full of Pantisocracy, he returned to Bristol and Southey, intending to set sail for America in the spring. But a serious question arose; how they were to obtain the funds necessary to carry out their scheme. Both the young men, moreover, had fallen in love, and with sisters, Sarah and Edith Fricker, and they wanted something to enable them to make provision for their marriage. They therefore determined to give public lectures at Bristol, and the winter and spring were occupied in this way. Coleridge lectured on political and moral subjects, Southey on historical. Two of his lectures Coleridge published under the title of *Conciones ad Populum*, and a third called "The Plot Discovered," without, we imagine, adding much to his income.

About this time, at Cottle's solicitation, Coleridge was preparing a volume of poems, for which he was to receive thirty guineas. His indolence and frequent neglect to furnish copy at the time promised are curiously illustrated by the notes which Cottle has preserved. Sometimes one engagement interfered, sometimes another; now "a devil, a very devil, had got possession of his left temple, eye, jaw, throat, and shoulder," and he could not write; now he (not the devil, but Mr. Coleridge) was "over the mouth and nose doing something of importance at Lovell's"; and so on, until Cottle at last grew tired of urging.

The volume was still further delayed by Coleridge's marriage, which took place on the 4th of October, 1795. He went immediately with his wife to a cottage at Clevedon, near Bristol, which must have been fitted up rather to gratify the taste than to satisfy the wants of its occupants, as two days after his marriage we find Coleridge writing to Cottle to ask him to send down "a riddle slice; a candle-box; two ventilators; two glasses for the wash-hand stand; one tin dust-pan; one small tin teakettle; one pair of candlesticks; one

carpet-brush ; one flour-dredge ; three tin extinguishers ; two mats ; a pair of slippers ; a cheese-toaster ; two large tin spoons ; a Bible ; a keg of porter ; coffee ; raisins ; currants ; catsup ; nutmegs ; allspice ; cinnamon ; rice ; ginger and mace.”* The next day, probably after the receipt of these articles, Coleridge writes to Poole, calling it “our comfortable cot.” In the same letter, he says, — “In the course of half a year I mean to return to Cambridge, having previously taken my name off from the University’s control, and, hiring lodgings there for myself and wife, finish my great work of *Imitations* in two volumes. My former works may, I hope, prove somewhat of genius and of erudition ; this will be better ; it will show great industry and manly consistency.”† But before the end of the year he had moved from Clevedon to Bristol, then to Stowey, to visit his friend Mr. Thomas Poole, and then back again to Bristol. Here again he set about preparing his poems for publication ; but the same delays were interposed as before, and the volume made but slow progress. In February, he wrote, during a fit of despondency occasioned by the clouds hanging over the future, and his sense of his own remissness, —

“It is my duty and business to thank God for all his dispensations, and to believe them the best possible ; but, indeed, I think I should have been more thankful, if he had made me a journeyman shoemaker instead of an author by trade. I have left friends ; I have left plenty ; I have left that ease which would have secured a literary immortality, and have enabled me to give to the public works conceived in moments of inspiration, and polished with leisurely solicitude ; and, alas ! for what have I left them ? For —, who deserted me in the hour of distress, and for a scheme of virtue impracticable and romantic.”

We have no idea to what prospects of plenty or ease Coleridge can refer in this letter, as having been left by him. Nor do we know whose desertion he complains of, unless he calls it desertion in Southey to have given up, some months before, that scheme which he himself now calls “impracticable and romantic.”

At last, in April, 1796, his volume of poems appeared, containing most of those pieces which have since been pub-

* Cottle, p. 30.† *Biog. Sup. to Biog. Lit.*, Vol. II., p. 348.

lished under the title of *Juvenile Poems*. Among them were his well known sonnet to Schiller, and the long poem called *Religious Musings*, which contains several passages of much beauty. Meanwhile, Coleridge, who had "given up" in October "all thoughts of a Magazine for various reasons," issued proposals in December for "a Miscellany to be called *The Watchman*, to be published on every eighth day from the first of March, to supply at once the places of a Review, Newspaper, and Annual Register." He soon set off on a tour to solicit subscriptions, and visited Worcester, Birmingham, Liverpool, and other places, preaching as a Unitarian wherever he could get an invitation to do so, and returned to Bristol in February, 1796, having succeeded in obtaining a large number of subscribers. The first number of *The Watchman* was issued on the 1st of March, the tenth and last on the 13th of May. The causes of its sudden failure were numerous. Coleridge himself wrote not more than a third of it, and even his portion was said to have but little striking merit. The prospectus had promised too much; the subscribers, becoming dissatisfied, fell off faster than they had been obtained, till at length the work did not pay its expenses. "Whatever was valuable and of a permanent nature in it was included in his later publications," says Mrs. H. N. Coleridge.

Plan after plan now succeeded, with such rapidity as to prevent any one of them from being carried into execution. First, Poole proposed to purchase an annuity for his friend, of which Coleridge writes, — "Concerning the scheme itself I am undetermined. Not that I am ashamed to receive; God forbid! I will make every possible exertion; my industry shall be at least commensurate with my learning and talents; if these do not procure for me and mine the necessary comforts of life, I can receive as I would bestow, and in either case, — receiving or bestowing, — be equally grateful to my Almighty Benefactor."* Coleridge's words frequently contrast strangely with his deeds. At this time, there were various literary pursuits open to him, from any one of which he might have gained a comfortable and respectable maintenance; but he rarely seems to have felt any honest shame about receiving, as a gift, money which he might have earned.

* *Biog. Sup. to Biog. Lit.*, p. 367.

During the last year or two, Cottle had made him frequent presents. He had given him the paper on which *The Watchman* was printed, had borne a large share of the burden of the loss on it, and seems, through the whole course of his acquaintance with Coleridge, to have been a most generous and unexacting friend.

The plan for the annuity failed, and Coleridge thought of taking charge of a school, which was offered to him on very advantageous terms. At the same time, the editor of the *London Morning Chronicle* proposed to him to write for his paper; but Coleridge hesitated, and nothing was done. At last, Mr. Charles Lloyd, the son of a banker at Birmingham, where he had become acquainted with Mr. Coleridge, proposed to him to receive him as an inmate in his family, "and made him such a pecuniary offer that Mr. Coleridge immediately acceded to the proposal." Lloyd was a young man of considerable literary taste, and, suffering from a deranged state of the nervous system, imagined that a residence with Coleridge would at once enable him to cultivate his mind and improve his health. Coleridge consequently took a house at Stowey, near Mr. Poole. Here his eldest son was born, and named after the metaphysician David Hartley, of whom Coleridge was then an admiring disciple. Wordsworth was living near Stowey, and with him Coleridge had already contracted a close intimacy. And now, with a home of his own, with friends around him, there seemed nothing to prevent him from accomplishing some of those literary projects which he had so often dreamed of. Two years before, he had read to Cottle "a list of eighteen different works, which he had resolved to write, several of them in quarto." Now was the time for him to prepare at least some one of them. But "men of genius," it is said, "are rarely either prompt in action or consistent in general conduct. Their early habits have been those of contemplative indolence, and the day-dreams with which they have been accustomed to amuse their solitude adapt them for splendid speculation, not temperate and practicable counsels."*

So Coleridge wrote this very year, and such is the history of his literary life. His poems, however, were now to be published in a second edition, and with them were to be con-

* *The Friend*, Vol. II., p. 188.

nected poems by his two friends, Lamb and Lloyd. The volume advanced but slowly, and we must leave the story of its completion to take notice of a letter which is of infinite importance, as connected with the history of Coleridge's life from this time. On the 5th of November, 1796, Coleridge writes to Poole as follows : —

“ I wanted such a letter as yours, for I am very unwell. On Wednesday night, I was seized with an intolerable pain from my right temple to the tip of my right shoulder, including my right eye, cheek, jaw, and that side of the throat. I was nearly frantic, and ran about the house almost naked, endeavouring by every means to excite sensation in different parts of my body, and so to weaken the enemy by creating a division. It continued from one in the morning till half past five, and left me pale and fainty. It came on fitfully, but not so violently, several times on Thursday, and began severer threats towards night; but I took between sixty and seventy drops of laudanum, and sopped the Cerberus just as his mouth began to open. On Friday it only niggled, as if the chief had departed, as from a conquered place, and merely left a small garrison behind, or as if he had evacuated the Corrica, and a few straggling pains only remained. But this morning he returned in full force, and his name is Legion. Giant-Fiend of a hundred hands, with a shower of arrowy death-pangs he transpierced me, and then he became a wolf and lay gnawing my bones! — I am not mad, most noble Festus! but in sober sadness I have suffered this day more bodily pain than I had before a conception of. My right cheek has certainly been placed with admirable exactness under the focus of some invisible burning-glass, which concentrated all the rays of a Tartarean sun. My medical attendant decides it to be altogether nervous, and that it originates either in severe application or excessive anxiety. My beloved Poole, in excessive anxiety I believe it might originate. I have a blister under my right ear, and I take 25 drops of laudanum every five hours, the ease and spirits gained by which have enabled me to write to you this flighty, but not exaggerating, account. With a gloomy wantonness of imagination I had been coquetting with the hideous possibilities of disappointment. I drank fears like wormwood, — yea, — made myself drunken with bitterness; for my ever-shaping and distrustful mind still mingled gall-drops, till out of the cup of Hope I almost poisoned myself with Despair.” — *Biog. Sup. to Biog. Lit.*, Vol. II., pp. 380, 381.

This strange letter, apparently written under the excitement consequent upon excessive use of laudanum, “ records,” his

daughter says, "Coleridge's first experience of opium." In after years, Coleridge himself repeatedly affirmed that bodily pain first led him to make use of this drug, which became the terrible curse of his life ; but he was accustomed to give an account altogether different from that in this letter of his first experience of it. Writing in 1826, he said, — "I had been ignorantly deluded by the seeming magic effects of opium in the sudden removal of a supposed rheumatic affection, attended with swellings in my knees and palpitations in my heart and pains all over me, by which I had been bed-ridden for nearly six months."* We find no notice, among the numerous letters and memoranda belonging to his early life, of this illness, and we have little doubt that he deceived himself with regard to this being the origin of the awful habit which became fixed upon him. Nor do we suppose that the letter from which we have quoted tells the story of its beginning. We think it must have commenced still earlier. We are willing to believe, in accordance with his repeated asseverations, that bodily pain first led him to use opium, although his admirer, Mr. De Quincey, has said, — "I believe it to be notorious that he first began the use of opium, not as a relief from any bodily pains or nervous irritations, for his constitution was strong and excellent, but as a source of luxurious sensations."† But we judge that in 1796 it was already a habit of self-indulgence, and that his mind was ill at ease. Lamb writes to him on the 8th of November in that year : —

"My brother, my friend, — I am distressed for you, believe me I am ; not so much for your painful, troublesome complaint, which, I trust, is only for a time, as for those anxieties which brought it on, and perhaps even now may be nursing its malignity. Tell me, dearest of my friends, is your mind at peace, or has any thing, yet unknown to me, happened to give you fresh disquiet, and steal from you all the pleasant dreams of future rest ? Are you still (I fear you are) far from being comfortably settled ? Would to God it were in my power to contribute towards the bringing you into the haven where you would be ! But you are too well skilled in the philosophy of consolation to need my humble tribute of advice ; in pain, and in sickness, and

* Gillman's *Life of Coleridge*, Vol. I., p. 246. See also Cottle's *Rem.* p. 272.

† *Tait's Magazine* for 1834, p. 593.

in all manner of disappointments, I trust you have that within you which shall speak peace to your mind." — Talfourd's *Life of Lamb*, p. 12.

That peace of mind which Lamb trusted was in his friend's possession was never again permanently his.

In May, 1797, appeared "Poems by S. T. Coleridge. Second Edition. To which are added Poems by Charles Lamb and Charles Lloyd."

The motto on the title-page was as follows : — "*Duplex nobis vinculum, et amicitia et similium junctarumque Camænarum; quod utinam neque mors solvat, neque temporis longinquitas.*" To this was subjoined a fictitious reference, *Groscoll. Epist. ad Cav. Utenhof. et Ptol. Lux. Tast.*; — the professed quotation and the reference being equally the fabrication of Coleridge.

This year has been well called the *annus mirabilis* of Coleridge's life; his poetical powers had reached their culminating point. That wonderful poem, *The Ancient Mariner*, the first and perhaps the more beautiful part of *Christabel*, the finest of his tragedies, *Remorse*, were all composed in this year, as well as that beautiful little poem entitled *Love*, and those lines, whose exquisite melody is only equalled by their wildness, beginning, —

"In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
A stately pleasure-dome decree;
Where Alph, the sacred river, ran,
Through caverns measureless to man,
Down to a sunless sea."

Poetical Works, Vol. I., p. 266.

This surely was enough for one year, a year of which we have no other memorials. The next year begins, somewhat sadly, with a quarrel between the three friends. We do not know the cause of it, but we suspect that Coleridge was somewhat ungenerous to Lamb and Lloyd, and, their joint volume not meeting with the success he anticipated, was inclined to charge the failure on the additions to it made by his friends. At any rate, in March, 1798, we find him writing to Cottle, — "Times change and people change; but let us keep our souls in quietness! I have no objection to any disposal of Lloyd's poems except that of their being republished with mine. The motto which I had prefixed, —

‘*Duplex*,’ &c., from Groscollius, has placed me in a ridiculous situation, but it was a foolish and presumptuous start of affectionateness, and I am not unwilling to incur the punishment due to my folly.”* And in June, Lloyd writes to Cottle, — “I thank you many times for your pleasing intelligence respecting Coleridge. I cannot think I have acted with or from passion towards him.”† The state of Lamb’s feelings toward Coleridge appears in a very amusing letter which he wrote to him about this time, and of which he transmitted a copy to Southey, saying : —

“Samuel Taylor Coleridge, to the eternal regret of his native Devonshire, emigrates to Westphalia, — ‘Poor Lamb (these were his last words) if he wants any *knowledge*, he may apply to me’; — in ordinary cases I thanked him, I have an ‘*Encyclopedia*’ at hand; but on such an occasion as going over to a German University, I could not refrain from sending him the following propositions, to be by him defended or oppugned (or both) at Leipsic or Gottingen.

“*Theses quædam Theologicæ.*

I.

“Whether God loves a lying angel better than a true man?”

II.

“Whether the archangel Uriel *could* knowingly affirm an untruth, and whether, if he *could*, he *would*?”

III.

“Whether honesty be an angelic virtue, or not rather belonging to that class of qualities which the Schoolmen term ‘*virtutes minus splendidæ, et hominis et terræ nimis participes*?’

IV.

“Whether the seraphim ardent do not manifest their goodness by the way of vision and theory? and whether practice be not a sub-celestial, and merely human virtue?”

V.

“Whether the higher order of seraphim illuminati ever *sneer*?”

VI.

“Whether pure intelligences can *love*, or whether they can love any thing besides pure intellect?”

VII.

“Whether the beatific vision be any thing more or less than a

* Cottle’s *Reminiscences*, p. 124.

† *Ibid.* p. 129.

perpetual representment to each individual angel of his own present attainments and future capabilities, something in the manner of mortal looking-glasses?

VIII.

“Whether an ‘immortal and amenable soul’ may not come to be damned at last, and the man never suspect it beforehand?”

“Samuel Taylor hath not deigned an answer; was it impertinent in me to avail myself of that offered source of knowledge?” — *Lamb’s Life*. New York. 1838. Vol. I. p. 56.

The sarcasms of this letter, however sportive, and the estimate of Coleridge’s character implied in the questions proposed, must have cut him to the quick; and it shows kindness of feeling on both sides that, two years after, they were as good friends as ever.

In February, 1798, the Unitarian clergyman of Shrewsbury came to settle at Bristol, and Coleridge determined to offer himself as his successor at Shrewsbury. His preaching was liked, and he received an invitation from the parish; but meanwhile the Messrs. Wedgwood, the distinguished manufacturers, who had become acquainted with Coleridge at Birmingham some years before, and had formed a high idea of his talents, determined to prevent him, if possible, from becoming a Unitarian clergyman. Their own religious views were much opposed to those which Coleridge professed, and they seem to have regretted that his talents should be employed in promulgating what they held to be false opinions. Accordingly, Mr. Josiah Wedgwood offered £100 to Coleridge if he would reject the Shrewsbury invitation. This offer was declined, and Coleridge accepted the invitation to Shrewsbury. The Messrs. Wedgwood then offered him an annuity of £150 a year for an indefinite series of years, if he would then, at that late hour, give up the idea of becoming a clergyman. Coleridge says, — “The moment I received Mr. J. Wedgwood’s letter, I accepted his offer.”*

It is commonly supposed, at least among us, that when a man determines to be a clergyman, he does so from some motive of duty, with some idea of self-sacrifice. But with Coleridge it was different; his profession was worth more to him than one hundred pounds, but one hundred and fifty pounds a year weighed down the scale.

* *Cottle’s Reminiscences*, p. 131.

This arrangement having been concluded, Coleridge seems to have given himself up again to forming plans for the future. Wordsworth's first work, *The Lyrical Ballads*, was published in the course of the summer, anonymously, and with it appeared *The Ancient Mariner*. During the autumn, Wordsworth and Coleridge determined to carry out an intention long held, of visiting Germany together. In September, they left England, accompanied by Miss Wordsworth, Mrs. Coleridge remaining at home. Probably Coleridge had much less consideration for his wife than when he wrote, —

“ Oft, oft, methinks, the while with thee
I breathe, as from the heart, thy dear
And dedicated name, I hear
A promise and a mystery,
A pledge of more than passing life,
Yea, in that very name of wife !”

Poetical Works, Vol. 1., p. 178.

In Miss Wordsworth, who had been living with her brother during the period of Coleridge's residence near Stowey, he had become acquainted with a woman superior in intellect to his wife, and more able, probably, to sympathize with his peculiarities of character. He sought her society, while his wife was sometimes neglected. The face of her who was so closely bound to him must have awakened frequent feelings of self-reproach in his heart. These feelings may have led him to form resolutions of exertion, never carried beyond a determination, and too often checked by the vanity which overlaid his character. Lamb said of him, — “ Coleridge is a man of excellent principles, but it's very unfortunate that whenever any thing comes to him in the shape of a duty, he can't find the heart to perform it.”

Of his residence in Germany we have many memorials, principally letters of his own. It seems to have been uneventful and agreeable. He said of it himself, — “ I made the best use of my time and means, and there is therefore no period of my life upon which I can look back with such unmingled satisfaction.”* In a letter to Mr. Josiah Wedgwood, dated Göttingen, May 21, 1799, he says, — “ I have read and made collections for a history of *Belles Lettres* in

* *Biographia Literaria*, Vol. I., p. 211.

Germany before the time of Lessing, and very large collections for a life of Lessing." In November of the same year, he returned to England, and went immediately to London. In January, 1800, he writes to Mr. Thomas Wedgwood, —

"Thank God, I have my health perfectly, and am working hard, yet the present state of human affairs presses on me for days together, so as to deprive me of all my cheerfulness. It is probable that a man's private and personal connections and interests ought to be uppermost in his daily and hourly thoughts, and that the dedication of too much fear and hope to subjects which are perhaps disproportionate to our faculties and powers is a disease. But I have had this disease so long, and my early education was so domestic, that I know not how to get rid of it, or even to wish to get rid of it. Life were so flat a thing without enthusiasm, that if for a moment it leaves me, I have a sort of stomach sensation attached to all my thoughts, like those which succeed to the pleasurable sensations of a dose of opium." *

He goes on to speak of his literary occupations, says he is about to write essays on the drama for the *Morning Post*, and then says, — "Two mornings and one whole day I dedicate to essays on the possible progressiveness of man, and on the principles of population. In April, I retire to my greater work, — *The Life of Lessing*."

In February, he seems to have been reporting for the *Morning Post*, and to have written various essays on general subjects for its columns. In fact, when he first came to London, he proposed to write daily for that paper. But Mr. Stuart, who was then its editor, says, writing in 1838 in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, — "Coleridge totally failed in the plan he proposed of writing daily on the daily occurrences." From this time, however, until 1802, he continued to write at intervals for the paper, and some of his essays have been said to possess undoubtedly high merit.

Toward the end of July, 1800, Coleridge wrote to Mr. Josiah Wedgwood, — "Have you seen my translation of *Wallenstein*? It is a dull, heavy play. I am now working at my *Introduction to the Life of Lessing*, which I trust will be in the press before Christmas; that is, the *Introduction* will be published first." †

The translation of *Wallenstein* had just appeared. To us

* Cottle's *Reminiscences*, p. 318.

† *Ibid.* p. 224.

it seems quite equal to the original ; the defects incident to a translation are for the most part avoided, and there are magnificent passages added by Coleridge to the play. The opinion that Coleridge expressed concerning its merits when it first appeared is very different from that which he afterwards held. In 1821, writing to Mr. Alsop, he says : —

“I am glad you are now to see the *Wallenstein* for the first time, as you will then see a specimen of my happiest attempts, during the prime manhood of my intellect, before I had been buffeted by adversity, or crossed by fatality.” — *Letters, Conversations, and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge*, p. 65.

In another letter, written from Keswick, in November, 1800, Coleridge says : —

“Immediately on my arrival in this country, I undertook to finish a poem which I had begun, entitled *Christabel*, for a second volume of the *Lyrical Ballads*. I tried to perform my promise, but the deep, unutterable disgust which I had suffered in the translation of the accursed *Wallenstein* seemed to have stricken me with barrenness, — till one day I dined out at the house of a neighbouring clergyman, and somehow or other drank so much wine, that I found some effort and dexterity requisite to balance myself on the hither edge of sobriety. The next day my verse-making faculties returned to me and I proceeded successfully.” — Cottle’s *Reminiscences*, p. 325.

At the time of the date of this letter, Coleridge was living at Keswick, where he had taken a small house. His son Derwent was just born, and here in quiet he intended to finish some one or more of his literary undertakings. He writes to Wedgwood, — “You will in three weeks see the letters on the ‘*Rise and Condition of the German Boors*’ ; they are in the printer’s hands.” But many a three weeks passed, and Mr. Wedgwood never saw them. For the next two years, from November, 1800, to September, 1802, we have no records whatever of Coleridge’s life, no letters, no memoranda, even. His fine ode to *Dejection*, addressed, we conjecture, to Miss Wordsworth, and that most beautiful of all his poems, *The Complaint and Reply*,* are almost the

* We are aware, that, in the *Literary Remains*, this poem is ascribed to the year 1809 ; but Mrs. H. N. Coleridge says it was written in 1802, and we are inclined to trust to her authority, as we have found one or two instances of mistakes in the dates assigned in the *Literary Remains*.

only compositions of this period. In September, 1802, Lamb made a three weeks' visit to Coleridge. After this, he wrote some essays in the *Morning Post*, and in October he writes to Mr. Thomas Wedgwood : —

“ I shall in a few weeks go to press with a volume on the prose writings of Hale, Milton, and Taylor, and shall immediately follow it up with an essay on the writings of Dr. Johnson and Gibbon, and in these two volumes I flatter myself I shall present a fair history of English prose. If my life and health remain, and I do but write half as much and as regularly as I have done during the last six weeks, this will be finished by January next ; and I shall then put together my memorandum-book on the subject of poetry. . . . I have, since my twentieth year, meditated an heroic poem on the siege of Jerusalem by Titus. This is the pride and the stronghold of my hope ; but I never think of it except in my best moods. The work to which I dedicate the ensuing year of my life is one which highly pleased Leslie,* in prospective.”

Again there is a period of a year in which no work was published, and of which few records remain. Those few are sad. In a letter dated September, 1803, he says : — “ I will not trouble you with the gloomy tale of my health. When I am awake, by patience, employment of mind, and walking, I can keep the fiend at arm's length ; but the night is my hell ! sleep my tormenting angel. Three nights out of four I fall asleep, struggling to lie awake, and my frequent night screams have almost made me a nuisance in my own house.”† Again, in January, 1804, he says, — “ I have been ill, very ill,”‡ and refers to similar sufferings. He then speaks of going to Madeira to restore his health, and says, — “ Wordsworth had, as I may truly say, forced on me one hundred pounds in the event of my going to Madeira, and Stuart had kindly offered to befriend me.” But no southern isle had balm to restore that wasted health, no friend could assist him where he wanted aid. In the same letter he says, — “ I am eager to hope all good things of my health. That gained, I have a cheering, and I trust prideless, confidence that I shall make an active and perseverant use of the faculties and acquirements that have been intrusted to my keeping, and a fair trial of their height, depth, and width.”

* The eminent Edinburgh Professor.

† Cottle's *Rem.*, p. 345.

‡ *Ibid.*

There can be no doubt that the sufferings detailed in the foregoing extracts were the result of an excessive use of opium. In the Confessions of an English Opium Eater, sufferings of the same nature are depicted with a terrible vividness. Nothing can be more mournful than the warnings which Coleridge himself has left us. In his *Friend*, he says : —

“ Restlessness can drive us to vices that promise no enjoyment, not even the cessation of that restlessness. This is, indeed, the dread punishment attached by nature to habitual vice, that its impulses wax, as its motives wane. No object, not even the light of a solitary taper in the far distance, tempts the benighted mind from before ; but its own restlessness dogs it from behind as with the iron goad of destiny.” — p. 137.

And again, in the poem called *The Visionary Hope* : —

“ Sad lot to have no hope ! Though, lowly kneeling,
He fain would frame a prayer within his breast ;
Would fain entreat for some sweet breath of healing,
That his sick body might have ease and rest ;
He strove in vain ! the dull sighs from his chest
Against his will the stifling load revealing,
Though Nature forced ; though like some captive guest,
Some royal prisoner at his conqueror’s feast,
An alien’s restless mood but half concealing,
The sternness on his gentle brow confessed
Sickness within and miserable feeling :
Though obscure pangs made curses of his dreams,
And dreaded sleep each night repelled in vain,
Each night was scattered by its own loud screams :
Yet never could his heart command, though fain,
One deep full wish to be no more in pain.”

In the spring of 1804, in a miserable state of health, Coleridge determined to go to Malta.* He could hardly have adopted a worse plan. Removed from his friends, exposed to the enervating effects of a southern climate, he fell more and more under the terrible bondage of opium. For some time, he performed the duties of public secretary of the island ; but his habits were too irregular for such a post, and before long he was superseded. During his residence in Malta, he saw much of Sir Alexander Ball, then civil com-

* Mrs. H. N. Coleridge states that he lectured in London in 1804, before going to Malta.

missioner of the island, and he speaks in his *Friend* "of that daily and familiar intercourse with him which made the fifteen months from May, 1804, to October, 1805, in many respects the most memorable and instructive period of my life." There are very few other records of this period.*

From Malta, Coleridge went to Italy, and remained in Rome for some months. Here he became acquainted with our distinguished countryman, Mr. Allston. This acquaintance ripened into a friendship of many years, which Allston has commemorated in a sonnet written after Coleridge's death.

Coleridge was hurried away from Italy, after some months' residence, as being a suspicious person, having written for the *Morning Post*, three years before, one or two invectives against Napoleon. At what time of the year he returned to England we are uncertain, and for the remainder of his life, with the exception of a few important events, we must fix the dates by inference, rather than from actual knowledge. The *Biographia Literaria* contains nothing of autobiography after this date, and the new *Biographical Supplement* to it has little narrative after 1800; Cottle, except as regards one point, deserts us at the time of the Malta voyage; Gillman's miserable volume is worth almost nothing with respect to the biography of Coleridge, while from the miscellaneous sketches of his life but few facts can be gleaned.

In December, 1806, we find Charles Lamb writing, — "Coleridge has come home, and is going to turn lecturer on taste at the Royal Institution." We do not know whether these lectures were delivered. If they were, like those of 1804 and 1808, they have left no trace behind them.

De Quincey, who saw Coleridge in 1807, says of him, — "Never had I beheld so profound an expression of cheerless despondency; and the restless activity of Coleridge's mind in chasing abstract truths, and burying himself in the dark places of human speculation, seemed to me in great measure an attempt to escape out of his own personal wretchedness." And wretched he must have been, now at London, now at

* Decatur was at this time stationed in the Mediterranean, and was frequently at Malta. He met Coleridge at Sir A. Ball's table, they were mutually interested in each other, and in after life both referred to their intercourse at this time with pleasure. See Mackenzie's *Life of Decatur*, p. 128.

Keswick and Grassmere, now at Stowey and Bridgewater, finding no relief from the miserable sufferings which goaded him to a continual restlessness. It was at this time that he wrote to his friend Mr. Wade the following strange and melancholy words : —

“It is not of comparative utility I speak ; for as to what has been actually done, and in relation to useful effects produced, whether on the minds of individuals or of the public, I dare boldly stand forward, and (let every man have his own, and that be counted mine which but for and through me would not have existed) will challenge the proudest of my literary contemporaries to compare proofs with me, of usefulness in the excitement of reflection, and the diffusion of original and forgotten, yet necessary and important, truths and knowledge ; and this is not the less true, because I have suffered others to reap all the advantages. But, O dear friend, this consciousness, raised by insult of enemies and alienated friends, stands me in little stead to my own soul, — in how little, then, before the all-righteous Judge ! who, requiring back the talents he had intrusted, will, if the mercies of Christ do not intervene, not demand of me what I have done, but why I did not do more ; why, with powers above so many, I had sunk in many things below most ! But this is too painful, and in remorse we often waste the energy which should be better employed in reformation, — that essential part, and only possible proof, of sincere repentance.” — *Cottle*, p. 257.

In the course of this year, Mr. De Quincey, who was a young man of fortune, presented to Mr. Coleridge, anonymously, through Cottle, a gift of three hundred pounds. He had become deeply interested in him through sympathy with his sufferings as an opium-eater, and had an excessive admiration for his powers of mind. Writing in 1834, he speaks of him as having “the largest and most spacious intellect, the subtlest and the most comprehensive, in my judgment, that has yet existed amongst men.” This sum of money for a time rendered Coleridge easy in his circumstances ; but before long a large portion of it had been spent in procuring opium. At length, in 1808 or 1809, leaving his wife and children to be taken care of by Southey, at Keswick, Coleridge went to live with Wordsworth at Grassmere.

Here *The Friend* was projected, and in good part written, and here its publication, in numbers, commenced on the 8th

of June, 1809. In the prospectus of it, extracted from a letter to a correspondent, he says : —

“ It is not unknown to you, that I have employed almost the whole of my life in acquiring, or endeavouring to acquire, useful knowledge by study, reflection, observation, and by cultivating the society of my superiors in intellect, both at home and in foreign countries. You know, too, that at different periods of my life I have not only planned, but collected the materials for, many works on various and important subjects ; so many, indeed, that the number of my unrealized schemes and the mass of my miscellaneous fragments have often furnished my friends with a subject of railleury and sometimes of regret and reproof.* Waiving the mention of all private and accidental hindrances, I am inclined to believe that this want of perseverance has been produced in the main by an over-activity of thought, modified by a constitutional indolence, which made it more pleasant to me to continue acquiring, than to reduce what I had acquired to a regular form. Add, too, that, almost daily throwing off my notices or reflections in desultory fragments, I was still tempted onward by an increasing sense of the imperfection of my knowledge, and by the conviction, that, in order fully to comprehend and develop any one subject, it was necessary that I should make myself master of some other, which again as regularly involved a third, and so on with an ever-widening horizon.”

These sentences, which very truly depict one portion of Coleridge's intellect, give the secret of the want of success attending the first publication of *The Friend*. He had proposed to himself too much in stating, — “ The object of *The Friend* is to uphold those truths and those merits which are founded in the nobler and permanent parts of our nature against the caprices of fashion, and such pleasures as either depend on transitory and accidental causes, or are pursued from less worthy impulses.” The subject was too vast, and constantly led him into desultory disquisitions, which, although connected more or less with the original design, still left a feeling of dissatisfaction that further progress was not

* Lamb, in a most admirably humorous letter to Manning, dated December 25th, 1815, says, — “ Coleridge is just dead, having lived just long enough to close the eyes of Wordsworth, who paid the debt of nature but a week or two before — poor Col. ! but two days before he died, he wrote to a bookseller proposing an epic poem on the ‘ Wanderings of Cain,’ in twenty-four books. It is said he has left behind him more than forty thousand treatises in criticism, metaphysics, and divinity, but few of them in a state of completion.” — Talfourd's *Life of Lamb*, Vol. I., p. 174.

made. The *Friend* is too well known to need any criticism from us. It is somewhat difficult, however, to judge of its merits, as first published, from the later editions, which are the only ones we have seen. For the edition of 1818, which the later ones have followed, "was rather a *rifacimento*," as the author said, "than a new edition, the additions forming so large a portion of the whole work, and the arrangement being altogether new."

The 27th and last number of the Lake edition was issued March 15th, 1810. It had proved a ruinous speculation in a pecuniary point of view, but, as affording Coleridge a regular employment for so long a period, it had been of essential service in restoring a somewhat more healthy tone to his mind. But again left without employment, his old habits returned and increased upon him, so that the next year is a blank in his life, and we know nothing more of him till we find him, in 1810, accompanying Mr. Basil Montagu to London, having left Keswick and Grassmere for ever. Before many months had passed, however, he went from Mr. Montagu to live at Hammersmith, with a Mr. Morgan, a gentleman whom he had known when at Bristol. Whilst here, he delivered a course of lectures before the London Philosophical Society. The prospectus was in part as follows:—"Mr. Coleridge will commence on Monday, November 19th, 1811, a course of lectures on Shakspeare and Milton, in illustration of the principles of poetry, and their application, as grounds of criticism, to the most popular works of later English poets, those of the living included." Of these lectures, as of his former courses, no report has been preserved. In the year 1811, Coleridge wrote frequently for the *Courier*, a paper which Mr. Stuart, the former editor of the *Morning Post*, now conducted. His communications were highly valued and well paid for. For some time he wrote with regularity, and we are left in doubt on what grounds he ceased to write for the paper.

How long he continued with the Morgans we do not know, but we imagine not later than 1813. While with them his health had again much improved, owing to the cause stated by Southey, in a letter written in 1815, in which he says,— "The Morgans, with great effort, succeeded in making him leave off opium for a time, and he recovered in consequence health and spirits"; and Coleridge

himself refers to the fact, in a letter written in April, 1814. But the victory was not complete, and the drug again assumed its awful dominion over him.

In the course of 1813, his tragedy, *Remorse*, was performed with the most flattering and merited success at Drury Lane ; Coleridge writes to his friend Mr. Poole, on the 13th of February : — “ I have never seen the play since the first night. It has been a good thing for the Theatre, ... and I shall get more by it than all my literary labors put together ; nay, thrice as much, subtracting my heavy losses in the *Watchman* and the *Friend*, including the copyright.” * In 1814, he delivered a course of lectures on *Shakspeare* at the Royal Institution, and when he had completed this course in London, he went down to Bristol to repeat it. But now, as when delivering a former course in London as described by De Quincey, “ never did a man treat his audience with less respect, or his task with less careful attention.” Sometimes he would keep his audience waiting for an hour or more, and sometimes he would not appear at all. Meanwhile, his manner was strange, and he complained much of illness. At length, his old friend, Mr. Cottle, addressed a long and earnest letter to him, beseeching him to renounce the use of opium and spirits. Coleridge replied in the following painfully degraded words : —

“ You have poured oil in the raw and festering wound of an old friend’s conscience, Cottle ! but it is *oil of vitriol* ! I but barely glanced at the middle of the first page of your letter, and have seen no more of it, — not from resentment, God forbid ! but from the state of my bodily and mental sufferings, that scarcely permitted human fortitude to let in a new visitor of affliction.

“ The object of my present reply is to state the case just as it is, — first, that for ten years the anguish of my spirit has been indescribable, the sense of my danger staring, but the consciousness of my *GUILT* worse, — far worse than all ! I have prayed, with drops of agony on my brow ; trembling, not only before the justice of my Maker, but even before the mercy of my Redeemer. ‘ I gave thee so many talents, what hast thou done with them ? ’ Secondly, overwhelmed as I am with a sense of my direful infirmity, I have never attempted to disguise or conceal the cause. On the contrary, not only to friends have I stated the whole case with tears and the very bitterness of shame, but

* *Biog. Supp. to Biog. Lit.*, p. 413.

in two instances I have warn'd young men, mere acquaintances, who had spoken of having taken laudanum, of the direful consequences, by an awful exposition of its tremendous effects on myself. . . . Had I but a few hundred pounds, but £ 200, — half to send to Mrs. Coleridge and half to place myself in a private madhouse, where I could procure nothing but what the physician thought proper, and where a medical attendant could be constantly with me for two or three months (in less than that time, life or death would be determined), then there might be hope. Now there is none!! O God! how willingly would I place myself under Dr. Fox, in his establishment; for my case is a species of madness, only it is a derangement, an utter impotence, of the volition, and not of the intellectual faculties." — Cottle's *Reminiscences*, pp. 272, 273.

His plan of going to an asylum for the insane Coleridge proposed again, and wrote to Cottle to ask him to get up a subscription among his, Coleridge's, friends, to defray the expenses attendant on its execution. To this, however, Cottle was averse, and wrote to consult Southey, with whom Coleridge's wife and children had been living for several years, as to what was best to be done. Southey's reply was as follows : —

“ *Keswick, April, 1814.*

“ My dear Cottle, — You may imagine with what feelings I have read your correspondence with Coleridge. Shocking as his letters are, perhaps the most mournful thing they discover is, that, while acknowledging the guilt of the habit, he imputes it still to morbid bodily causes; whereas, after every possible allowance is made for these, every person who has witnessed his habits knows that for the greater, infinitely the greater part, inclination and indulgence are its motives.

“ It seems dreadful to say this, with his expressions before me; but it is so, and I know it to be so, from my own observation, and that of all with whom he has lived. The Morgans, with great difficulty and perseverance, *did* break him of the habit, at a time when his ordinary consumption of laudanum was from *two quarts a week to a pint a day!* He suffered dreadfully during the first abstinence, so much so as to say it was better for him to die than to endure his present feelings. Mrs. Morgan resolutely replied, it was indeed better that he should die than that he should continue to live as he had been living. It angered him at the time, but the effort was persevered in.

“ To what, then, was the relapse owing? I believe to this cause, — that no use was made of renewed health and spirits;

that time passed on in idleness, till the lapse of time brought with it a sense of neglected duties, and then relief was again sought for a *self-accusing mind*; — in bodily feelings, which, when the stimulus ceased to act, added only to the load of self-accusation. This, Cottle, is an insanity which none but the soul's physician can cure. Unquestionably, restraint would do as much for him as it did when the Morgans tried it; but I do not see the slightest reason for believing it would be more permanent. This, too, I ought to say, that all the medical men to whom Coleridge has made his confession, have uniformly ascribed the evil, not to bodily disease, but indulgence. The restraint which alone could effectually cure is that which no person can impose upon him. Could he be compelled to a certain quantity of labor every day, *for his family*, the pleasure of having done it would make his heart glad, and the sane mind would make the body whole.

“I see nothing so advisable for him, as that he should come here to Greta Hall. My advice is, that he should visit T. Poole for two or three weeks, to freshen himself and recover spirits, which new scenes never fail to give him. When there, he may consult his friends at Birmingham and Liverpool on the fitness of lecturing at those two places, at each of which he has friends, and would, I should think beyond all doubt, be successful. He must be very unfortunate, if he did not raise from fifty to one hundred pounds at the two places. But whether he can do this or not, here it is that he ought to be. He knows in what manner he would be received; by his children with joy; by his wife, not with tears, if she can control them, — certainly not with reproaches; by myself only with encouragement.

“He has sources of direct emolument open to him in the Courier, and in the Eclectic Review. These for his immediate wants, and for every thing else his pen is more rapid than mine, and would be paid as well. If you agree with me, you had better write to Poole that he may press him to make a visit, which I know he has promised. His great object should be, to get out a play, and appropriate the whole produce to the support of his son Hartley, at college. Three months' pleasurable exertion would effect this. Of some such fit of industry I by no means despair; of any thing more than fits, I am afraid I do. But this, of course, I shall never say to him. From me he shall never hear aught but cheerful encouragement, and the language of hope. I hope you next will tell me that he is going to Mr. T. Poole's. I have communicated some of your letters to Mrs. Coleridge, who you know resides with us. Her spirits and health are beginning to sink under it. God bless you!

“Yours affectionately,

“ROBERT SOUTHEY.”

Cottle now proposed to raise an annuity of £ 150, to be held in trust for Coleridge, and Southey again writes to him : —

“ Of sorrow and humiliation I will say nothing. Let me come at once to the point. On what grounds can such a subscription as you propose raising for Coleridge be solicited? The annuity to which your intended letter refers (£ 150) *was* given him by the Wedgwoods. Thomas, by his will, settled his portion on Coleridge, for his life. Josiah withdrew his about three years ago. The half still remaining amounts, when the income-tax is deducted, to £ 67. 10s. That sum Mrs. C. receives at present, and it is all which she receives for supporting herself, her daughter, and the two boys at school; — the boys’ expenses amounting to the whole. No part of Coleridge’s embarrassment arises from his wife and children, — except that he has insured his life for a thousand pounds, and pays the annual premium. He never writes to them, and never opens a letter from them !

“ In truth, Cottle, his embarrassments, and his miseries, of body and mind, all arise from one accursed cause, — excess in *opium*, of which he habitually takes more than ever was known to be taken by any person before him. . . . Perhaps you are not aware of the costliness of this drug. In the quantity which C. takes, it would consume *more* than the whole which you propose to raise. A frightful consumption of *spirits* is added. In this way bodily ailments are produced, and the wonder is that he is still alive.

“ There are but two grounds on which a subscription of this nature can proceed, — either when the object is disabled from exerting himself, or when his exertions are unproductive. Coleridge is in neither of these predicaments. Proposals after proposals have been made to him by the booksellers, and he repeatedly closed with them. He is at this moment as capable of exertion as I am, and would be paid as well for whatever he might be pleased to do. There are two Reviews, the Quarterly and the Eclectic, in both of which he might have employment at ten guineas a sheet. As to the former, I could obtain it for him; in the latter, they are urgently desirous of his assistance. *He promises, and does nothing.* . . . Nothing is wanting to make him easy in circumstances, and happy in himself, but to leave off opium, and to direct a certain portion of his time to the discharge of *his duties*. Four hours a day would suffice.” — Cottle, pp. 279, 280.

But to every plan that Southey proposed Coleridge was irreconcilably averse, and this unhappy man sank still lower in

the gulf of misery into which he had plunged. For a time he placed himself in the hands of a physician, and while under his care he wrote, — “ I cannot be too grateful for the skill with which the surgeon treats me ” ; and again, — “ It is true I am restored as much beyond my expectations almost, as my deserts.” But

“ What boots it at one gate to make defence
And at another to let in the foe ? ”

At this very period, instead of being restored, he was worse ; for he almost daily employed himself in obtaining laudanum, without the knowledge of his physician, by actual deceit.* About this time he wrote the following letter to Mr. Wade.

“ Bristol, June 26th, 1814.

“ Dear Sir, — For I am unworthy to call any good man friend, — much less you, whose hospitality and love I have abused ; accept, however, my entreaties for your forgiveness, and for your prayers.

“ Conceive a poor miserable wretch, who for many years has been attempting to beat off pain by a constant recurrence to the vice which reproduces it. Conceive a spirit in hell, employed in tracing out for others the road to that heaven from which his crimes exclude him ! In short, conceive whatever is most wretched, helpless, and hopeless, and you will form as tolerable a notion of my state as it is possible for a good man to have.

“ I used to think the text in St. James, that ‘ he who offended in one point offends in all,’ very harsh ; but I now feel the awful, the tremendous truth of it. In the one crime of OPIUM, what crime have I not made myself guilty of ! — Ingratitude to my Maker ! and to my benefactors — injustice ! *and unnatural cruelty to my poor children !* — self-contempt for my repeated promise-breach, nay, too often, actual falsehood !

“ After my death, I earnestly entreat that a full and unqualified narration of my wretchedness, and of its guilty cause, may be made public, that at least some little good may be effected by the direful example.

“ May God Almighty bless you, and have mercy on your still affectionate, and in his heart grateful S. T. COLERIDGE.” †

When we consider the powers which had been bestowed on this man, and the promise of his youth, we confess, that in the records of biography we could hardly point to a more mournful picture than this.

* *Vide Cottle's Rem.*, p. 285.

† *Ibid.*, p. 292.

There is now another blank in Coleridge's life. His friends could do no more for him. We hear of him at length residing at Calne, with Mr. Morgan, the same friend with whom he had lived in 1812. A year passes, and we find him writing to Cottle, begging for money as an advance on poems which he promised to send him; then comes a second letter still more urgent, the last that Cottle ever received from him. From April, 1815, to April, 1816, is another unrecorded year.

On the 9th of April, 1816, a physician, Dr. Adams, wrote to Mr. Gillman of Highgate, likewise a physician by profession, telling him that a gentleman, who had for some years been in the habit of taking large quantities of opium, was desirous "to fix himself in the house of some medical gentleman, who will have courage to refuse him any laudanum, and under whose assistance, should he be the worse for it, he may be relieved," and ended by requesting Mr. Gillman to receive him into his family. Gillman was not averse to the proposition. He met Coleridge the next day, they were mutually pleased with each other, and on the 15th of April Coleridge went to Mr. Gillman's to reside. Here for eighteen years he lived, and here he died.

Of this period, considering its length, very few memorials have appeared. We know little of Mr. Gillman and his family, save the warm terms in which Coleridge was accustomed to speak of them. The single volume of Mr. Gillman's *Life of Coleridge*, which was published in 1838, has given us no favorable impression of its author. He writes like a special pleader ignorant of the cause he has undertaken; his style is detestable, the facts which he relates are meagre, and are often recorded with utter disregard to their chronological arrangement. We are not surprised that his promised second volume has never been published. That he became sincerely attached to Coleridge we do not doubt, but we suspect that his influence over him was at no time very great. It is true, that, within a short period of his going to reside at Highgate, the quantity of opium in which Coleridge indulged was very much diminished, and that his mind began to re-assume a more healthy tone. But we believe that there is no doubt that at no subsequent period of his life was he entirely a stranger to its use for any considerable time. His letters to Alsup contain not infrequent references to suffer-

ings produced by the recent use of opium. In a letter written in 1821, he says : — “ Pray for me, my dear friend, that I may not pass such another night as the last. While I am awake and retain my reasoning powers, the pang is gnawing, but I am, except for a fitful moment or two, tranquil ; it is the howling wilderness of sleep that I dread.” *

The habit had been fixed too deep to be uprooted, and it seems to us that during the few years preceding 1815 his mind had sustained a shock from which it never afterward fully recovered. We are aware that this is very different from the view entertained by Coleridge himself, and by some of his friends ; but we think that our opinion is justified by the comparison of those of his works which were composed and published after 1815 with those which were written while “ the dark pillar was not wholly turned.”

Nor do we believe that he ever again enjoyed that peace of mind, far more to be prized than any intellectual powers, which is to be obtained only through the consciousness of having faithfully performed one's part in life ; and though at times he may have had the consciousness of heartfelt repentance, yet, underneath the momentary repose which this or some lower feeling may have given him, the memory of the past must have been ever gnawing at his breast.

“ The sad forms of scenes and deeds long past
Blend into spectral shapes and death-like life,
And pass in silent, stern procession ! —
The storm is past ; — but in the pause and hush,
Nor calm, nor tranquil joy, nor peace are mine.” †

In 1816 Coleridge published his first Lay Sermon, entitled *The Statesman's Manual, or the Bible the best Guide to Political Knowledge and Foresight*. This was followed, in the next year, by a second volume, “ addressed to the higher and middle classes on the existing distresses and discontents ” ; and he proposed to write still another. In the last editions, these are associated with a little book published first in 1830, *On the Constitution of the Church and State*. These three publications we consider by far the least valuable that have appeared from Coleridge's pen. His life had not

* *Letters, Conversations, and Recollections of S. T. Coleridge*, p. 56.

† *Consolations of a Maniac*, by J. H. Green. See Coleridge's *Poetical Works*, Vol. II., p. 135.

fitted him to be a safe guide in matters of politics ; his mind was naturally speculative rather than practical, and from many of his views the generality of readers would entirely dissent. We do not mean to deny to him the merit of right intention in publishing these little works, or to imply that we consider that there is nothing valuable in them ; “ *omnibus enim rebus, omnibusque sermonibus, aliquid salutare est.* ”

In the course of 1816 and 1817, the two parts of *Christabel* (the second part for the first time) were published in a small volume, with *Kubla Khan* and the *Pains of Sleep*. This was shortly followed by the *Biographia Literaria* and the volume of poems entitled *Sibylline Leaves*, which contained some of his finest pieces. The *Biographia Literaria* had been in great part composed some years before. He intended it as a statement of his principles in politics, religion, and philosophy, and an application of the rules deduced from philosophical principles of poetry and criticism. Again, as was so often the case, he fell far short of his mark. His principles of politics and religion were but slightly touched upon, and his principles of philosophy were borrowed from Schelling, Maasz, and Fichte, without sufficient acknowledgment of the sources whence they came. Coleridge's plagiarisms in this book, and others of his works, were somewhat harshly pointed out by De Quincey and by a writer in *Blackwood's Magazine*, which has led Mrs. Henry N. Coleridge, in her long and rambling Introduction to the last edition of the *Biographia Literaria*, to enter into a defence of her father. We quote but one sentence from it ; but that one seems to cover the whole ground.

“ If he was not always sufficiently considerate of other men's property, he was profuse of his own ; and in truth, such was his temper in regard to all property, of what kind soever ; he did not enough regard or value it, whether for himself or his neighbour.” — *Introduction to Biographia Literaria*, p. 18.

We should, however, be inclined to believe that he set less value on property that belonged to his neighbour than on his own. The criticism on Wordsworth's poetry in the *Biographia Literaria* seems to us in many respects exceedingly happy, and the best portion of this most desultory book.*

* We are glad to see, that, in the last edition, Coleridge's daughter has had the good taste to omit several very objectionable passages in her father's

In the autumn of 1817, *Zapolya*, a Christmas Tale, was composed and published. It contains passages of much beauty, but as a whole is far inferior to *Remorse*. During the winters of 1817 and 1818, Coleridge lectured for the last time in public. We believe that he very seldom wrote out any lectures previously to delivery, except when he was lecturing at Bristol before his marriage. This explains why nothing but fragments of his different courses are left. In the volumes of his *Literary Remains* "we have extracts from lectures of all dates from 1802, partly in the words of the critic's own manuscripts, partly the mere notes of his hearers; we have isolated memoranda, of which most are the writer's own, but some are only quotations; we have changes of opinion stated without being accounted for, and hints of other opinions insufficiently explained." And yet these fragments contain much that is valuable. His criticism on Shakspeare, where he does not descend to points of mere verbal conjecture, is superior to any other that we are acquainted with.

But few letters which were written during these years have since been published. The most of them are to be found in a work entitled *Letters, Conversations, and Recollections of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, published anonymously, but understood to be by a Mr. Alsop. Alsop's own portion of the book is worthless, but the letters which he has preserved are many of them exceedingly illustrative of this period of Coleridge's life. In a letter, written in January, 1821, very remarkable for the view it gives of his state of mind and plans during this period, Coleridge says, —

"My health, I have reason to believe, is so intimately connected with the state of my spirits, and these again are so dependent on my thoughts, prospective and retrospective, that I should not doubt the being favored with a sufficiency for my noblest undertaking, had I the ease of heart requisite for the necessary abstraction of the thoughts, and such a reprieve from the goading of the immediate exigencies as might make tranquillity possible. But, alas! I know by experience (and the knowledge is not the less because the regret is not unmixed with self-blame, and the consciousness of want of exertion and fortitude) that my health wil

attack on the *Edinburgh Review*, in retaliation for its slashing criticisms of his works, though in her own *Introduction* she has seen fit to rake together again the dying embers of this controversy between Jeffrey and Coleridge.

continue to decline as long as the pain from reviewing the barrenness of the past is great in an inverse proportion to any rational anticipations of the future."

He goes on to give a very extraordinary account of the interruptions to which he was exposed, — letters from lords and ladies urging him to write reviews, letters from actors, entreaties for money, or for recommendations to publishers, &c. ; he then states that he had the written materials and contents, requiring only to be put together, of a work on Shakspeare and the English Drama, which with every art of compression would amount to three volumes of five hundred pages each. In the same state with this was a Philosophical Analysis of the Genius and Works of Dante, Spenser, Milton, and other poets, in one large volume. "These two works will, I flatter myself, form a complete code of the principles of judgment and feeling applied to works of taste ; and not of *poetry* only, but of poesy in all its forms, painting, statuary, music, &c." But besides these, he had, thirdly, in a state of preparation,

"The History of Philosophy considered as a Tendency of the Human Mind to exhibit the Powers of the Human Reason, to discover by its own Strength the Origin and Laws of Man and the World, from Pythagoras to Locke and Condillac. Two volumes. — IV. Letters on the Old and New Testaments, and on the Doctrine and Principles held in common by the Fathers and Founders of the Reformation, addressed to a Candidate for Holy Orders ; including Advice on the Plan and Subjects of Preaching, proper to a Minister of the Establishd Church."

To the completion of these four works, he says he had literally nothing more to do than to transcribe, but from so many scraps, from the margins of books, from blank pages, that unfortunately he must be his own scribe, or they would be all but lost.

"In addition to these — of my *great work*, to the preparation of which more than twenty years of my life have been devoted, and on which my hopes of extensive and permanent utility, of fame, in the noblest sense of the word, mainly rest — Of this work, to which all my other writings (unless I except my poems, and these I can exclude in part only) are introductory and preparative ; and the result of which (if the premises be — as I, with the most tranquil assurance, am convinced they are — in-

subvertible, the deductions legitimate, and the conclusions commensurate, and only commensurate, with both) must finally be a revolution of all that has been called *Philosophy* or *Metaphysics* in England and France, since the era of the commencing predominance of the mechanical system, at the restoration of our second Charles, and with this the present fashionable views, not only of religion, morals, and politics, but even of the modern physics and physiology. You will not blame the earnestness of my expressions, nor the high importance which I attach to this work; for how, with less noble objects, and less faith in their attainment, could I stand acquitted of folly, and abuse of time, talents, and learning, in a labor of three fourths of my *intellectual* life? Of this work, something more than a volume has been dictated by me, so as to exist fit for the press, to my friend and enlightened pupil, Mr. Green. And here comes, my dear friend, here comes my sorrow and my weakness, my grievance and my confession. Anxious to perform the duties of the day arising out of the wants of the day, these wants, too, presenting themselves in the most painful of all forms, — that of a debt owing to those who will not exact it, and yet need its payment, and the delay, the long (not live-long, but *death*-long) behindhand of my accounts to friends, whose utmost care and frugality on the one side, and industry on the other, the wife's management and the husband's assiduity are put in requisition to make both ends meet, — I am at once forbidden to attempt, and too perplexed earnestly to pursue, the *accomplishment* of the works worthy of me, those, I mean, above enumerated. Now I see but one possible plan of rescuing my permanent utility. It is briefly this, and plainly. For what we struggle with inwardly, we find at least easiest to *bolt out*, namely, — that of engaging from the circle of those who think respectfully and hope highly of my powers and attainments a yearly sum, for three or four years, adequate to my actual support, with such comforts and decencies of appearance as my health and habits have made necessities, so that my mind may be unanxious as far as the present time is concerned; that thus I should stand both enabled and pledged to begin some one work of those above mentioned, and for two thirds of my whole time to devote myself to this exclusively till finished, to take the chance of its success by the best mode of publication that would involve me in no risk, then to proceed with the next, and so on till the works above mentioned, as already in full material existence, should be reduced into formal and actual being; while in the remaining third of my time I might go on maturing and completing my great work (for if but easy in mind, I have no doubt either of the reawakening power or of

the kindling inclination), and my Christabel and what else the happier hour might inspire. . . . Now Mr. Green has offered to contribute from thirty to forty pounds yearly, for three or four years; my young friend and pupil, the son of one of my dearest old friends, fifty pounds, and I think that from ten to twenty pounds I could rely upon for another. The sum required would be about two hundred pounds, to be repaid, of course, should the disposal and sale of my writings produce the means."

The character which is shown, and the facts which appear in these extracts, might be still further illustrated by passages from other letters and writings belonging to this period. But we have no disposition to follow any farther a subject so painful.

The first edition of *The Aids to Reflection* was published in 1825; a work which from its desultory plan was suited to Coleridge's genius, and in which consequently his powers of thought are shown to great advantage. Our space is too narrow to allow us to enter into any remarks upon it here.

But the principal literary occupation of his later years consisted in conversation. From the time of his college life, he had been distinguished for the power and beauty of his language. To his intimate friends he would talk for hour after hour, rarely allowing them an opportunity of replying. "He one day said to Lamb, 'Charlie, did you ever hear me preach?' 'I never heard you do any thing else,' replied Lamb." Every Thursday evening there was a gathering at Highgate of disciples and friends who had come to hear Coleridge, the philosopher, discourse. There were Green and Alsop, his dearest friends and most willing pupils; there, perhaps, were Talfourd and Lockhart; and there was Henry Nelson Coleridge, who since his uncle's death has published, under the title of *Table Talk*, such scraps of these conversations as he had been able to note down; and there were others of less note, who had come through curiosity or admiration. There are in the fragments of these conversations the greatest inequalities. Now and then occur exquisite thoughts, beautifully expressed; now we have passages equally striking for their ignorance and arrogance. But we do not believe that such passages can give an idea of the style of his conversation, as it continued an unbroken strain for hour after hour. The only attempt at a report of one of these monologues that we have met with is in the *Gentleman's*

Magazine for December, 1846. It is too long for quotation in full, but we give the commencement of it.

“G—— took me to see and hear Coleridge. I was sadly disappointed in his appearance. I looked for the light of genius which had exercised such influence on his age, but I could not find it. G—— attacked him on his having said that the interview of Hector and Andromache in the 6th Iliad was a modern interpolation, and supported his argument for its authenticity very well. . . . But Coleridge never listened in the least to more than the first words, and seemed restless till G—— had done, and he could speak himself, to tell us that we did not understand him, that in fact nobody ever did understand him, but that he would some time or other publish something which would explain every thing. ‘The chief difficulty of understanding what I said about Hector and Andromache arises from the want of training in the rising generation, a want as well bodily, I may say, as mental.’”

Such are the memorials of the later years of Coleridge’s life. During all this period, his family had continued to reside for the most part with Mr. Southey. They had occasionally been to see him, and in his letters he speaks with warmth of his sons. But they were not with him to minister to the wants of his premature old age. Suffering and sad, the last years of his life passed slowly away. The melancholy past was joined in his reflections with the solemn future.

Coleridge died on the 25th of July, 1834.

“For him there is no longer any future.
 No ominous hour
 Knocks at his door with tidings of mishap.
 Far off is he, above desire and fear;
 No more submitted to the change and chance
 Of the unsteady planets.”

“By what I *have* effected am I to be judged by my fellow-men; what I *could* have done is a question for my own conscience,” said Coleridge. From a view like this we entirely dissent. Every man is accountable to his fellow-men for the use which he makes of the talents which are intrusted to his charge. The greater those talents, the greater becomes his responsibility. No one has a right to say, my fellow-men shall not question me. Before the solemn tribunal of the present and the future all men must stand, and according to their works shall they be judged.